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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
09/612,009	07/07/00	NELSON	254/139 P00-

022249  
LYON & LYON LLP  
633 WEST FIFTH STREET  
SUITE 4700  
LOS ANGELES CA 90071

PM92/1002

EXAMINER

BRAHAN, T

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3652


DATE MAILED: 10/02/01

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks



1. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. § 121:
  - I. Claims 1-10, drawn to a wafer handling system, classified in Class 414, subclass 222.
  - II. Claim 11, drawn to a method of handling a wafer, classified in Class 414, subclass 811.
  - III. Claims 12-14, drawn to a method of handling a wafer pod, classified in Class 414, subclass 806.
2. Inventions I and II are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In the instant application the apparatus, as recited in the claims, can be used to practice a materially different process that the recited horizontal transfer. Inventions II and III are related as methods usable together and are distinct as each method has separate utility. Inventions I and III are distinct as they are unrelated to each other.
3. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.
4. An inquiry concerning this action should be directed to Examiner Thomas J. Brahan at telephone number (703) 308-2568 on Mondays through Thursdays from 8:30-6:00 EST. The examiner's supervisor, Ms. Eileen Lillis, can be reached at (703) 308-3248. The fax number for Technology Center 3600 is (703) 305-7687.

 10/1/01  
THOMAS J. BRAHAN  
PRIMARY EXAMINER